

A Special Guantanamo Bay Gazette Insert

2004 Hurricane Edition

Your Guide to Preparing for the Hurricane Season

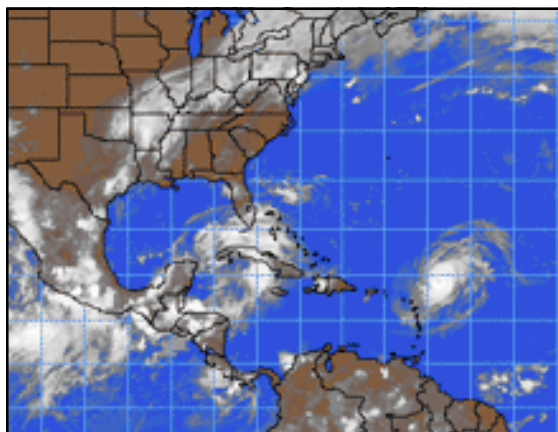
Prepare Now! Experts Predicting “Above Normal” 2004 Hurricane Activity

Hurricane season starts June 1, and, once again, the Gazette staff has assembled a special Hurricane Edition for the residents of GTMO.

New and old residents will find such valuable information as first aid tips, where to tune for information, what to do with your pets and what supplies should be in your hurricane basket.

Top hurricane experts from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) say the 2004 Atlantic hurricane season will likely have above normal levels of activity. The outlook calls for the potential of 11 to 15 tropical storms, with six to nine hurricanes, and two to four classified as major hurricanes (Category 3 or higher).

Officials from NOAA and the Federal Emergency



In 2003, Hurricane Fabian skirted Caribbean islands near Guantanamo Bay. The Category 4 storm was packing winds of 140 mph (220 km/h). Hurricanes are ranked 1 to 5 on what is known as the Saffir-Simpson scale

Management Agency advised residents in Atlantic and Gulf Coast states to be prepared throughout the season, which runs June 1 through Nov. 30.

On average the Atlantic hurricane season brings 10 tropical storms, with six reaching hurricane strength and two of those classified as major. Above normal activity has been observed during six of the last eight Atlantic hurricane seasons, reflecting an overall larger number of tropical storms and hurricanes observed since 1995.

The possibility of an above normal Atlantic hurricane season is further reason to prepare now rather than waiting for the unknowns of the last minute rush.

GTMO Weather Office Keeps Residents Informed

They predict the weather. You might say that's a piece of cake in Guantanamo Bay since the weather is the same every day. Try telling that to the aerographers who man the Naval Atlantic Meteorology and Oceanography Detachment (NLMOD) on Leeward Point, especially during hurricane season.

NLMOD's primary mission is to keep the public and the Navy Department updated on anything to do with weather and oceanography.

Most residents frequently check the weather channel and know that Guantanamo Bay averages a balmy 90 degrees during the day and a comfortable 70 degrees at night.

Locally, the coverage area is around Guantanamo and the area covers Jamaica to the Windward Passage, but when the weather



Weather Forecasters AG2(SW) Timothy Harris and AG2(SW) Christie Holloway, discuss the Daily Outlook during Hurrex 2004.

changes, as it does this time of year, our coverage area will expand from the Gulf of Mexico east to Africa.

Activity for NLMOD increases during the hurricane season. The weather office is manned 24-hours a day by the chief petty officer-in-charge, two forecasters and two technicians upon the setting of Hurricane Condition III. Before Guantanamo's weathermen begin their 24-hour test of endurance, they must first detect the storm.

Even though tropical storms and hurricanes may form in the Atlantic or Caribbean, the severe weather must overcome many

obstacles to strike Guantanamo Bay.

A quick check of a topographical map of the Caribbean region

See Weather Office, page 3

GTMO Keeps Eye on the Weather

Hurricanes, by definition, are the final and most dangerous stage of cyclonic storms. They possess wind speeds of greater than 64 knots (74 mph) and are accompanied by severe and damaging weather.

The warm waters of the Caribbean, which surround Cuba, are often conducive to hurricanes. This is especially true during the summer and fall months.

June 1 is the start of hurricane season and it lasts until Nov. 30. Guantanamo Bay remains in a state of increased preparedness during this time.

As the base population is in a continuous process of turnover, an ongoing education program is required to maintain a high state of readiness. The yearly hurricane exercise is an example of this effort. However, many people check on board between exercises, while others simply fail to remember what they are expected to do.

Because of the potential threat to Guantanamo Bay by hurricanes, it is imperative that all base residents be familiar with the warning conditions and what to do

if the base is threatened.

You should review COMNAVBASEGTMOINST 3440.4 in order to become familiar with hurricane conditions of readiness. Copies of this instruction are now provided as you move into family housing.

Guantanamo Bay is in Tropical Cyclone Condition V (see page 8 for breakdown of the Tropical Cyclone conditions) from June 1 to Nov. 30, unless a storm threatens the base, causing an upgrading of the hurricane preparedness condition.

In 1998, Hurricane Georges passed over GTMO and the base sustained some high winds and damage. The base was fortunate not to have any injuries or casualties.

Being prepared means it's a good idea to



In 1998, Hurricane Georges swept through Guantanamo Bay. It produced sustained winds of 55 mph with gusts up to 64 mph.

have some safety rules to follow. Here are just a few.

Prior to a tropical storm/hurricane threat

- Know the location of your shelter if your housing is not hurricane-resistant.
- Know the safe haven for your boat.
- Know the conditions of readiness.

see Eye on Weather, page 8

NEX Can Help Assemble Hurricane Baskets



For those of you who aren't sure what to put in your hurricane basket, stop by the display set up at the Navy Exchange. The following also provides a good list of items residents should assemble. Everyone should have a hurricane basket ready at all times.

The basket should include:

- Enough canned, or other ready-to-eat food for 24 to 48 hours for you and your family, including items such as a can opener, disposable plates, cups, forks, knives, spoons, paper towels, napkins, bottled water, plastic drop cloth, and other items such as these.
- Minimum clothing, soap, toilet articles, and a towel for each member of the family.
- One blanket for each family member.
- Disposable diapers, baby formula and nursing supplies for infants.
- Batteries, flashlights, water containers, first-aid kits, safety matches, bandages, candles, portable battery-powered radio, wind-up alarm clock and cooler.
- Nonessential, but desirable items may include small toys, reading material, playing cards, oil lamps/lamp oil, etc.
- A seven-day supply of all medications taken for chronic or acute medical conditions such as asthma, high blood pressure or heart problems.

- Moist towelettes
- Blankets
- First aid kits
- Safety matches
- Bandages
- Books, cards, nonelectric games
- Bag/basket large enough to carry everything

Do not take the following items to the hurricane shelter:

- Pets
- Alcoholic beverages
- Cooking utensils/equipment
- Valuables
- Electric games or devices
- Large toys
- Nonessential personal belongings

First Aid: Are You Prepared For Any Emergency

Hurricane preparedness means having a first aid kit and refreshing your emergency medical skills. During a hurricane, people are injured by flying debris. After the storm, shattered glass, broken tree limbs and fallen power lines may cause further injuries.

According to U.S. Naval Hospital GTMO personnel, you can either buy or make your own first aid kit, and if you have to treat someone yourself, follow these guidelines:

- Look the injured person over from head to toe; check for breathing, bleeding and broken bones.

- If necessary, first restore breathing. You can learn CPR and first aid at classes offered by American Red Cross-certified instructors. Call the Red Cross Office at 5060 to find out about upcoming classes.

- After breathing is restored, stop the bleeding. Apply direct firm pressure to the wound, with sterile gauze pads. Don't remove the gauze pads; just add new pads if the bleeding continues. Keep pressure on the wound. If the injury is on an arm or leg, elevate the limb. Tourniquets are used only as a last resort.

- Check for broken bones, or parts of the body that look deformed, for example: a dislocated shoulder. A temporary splint can be made by securing a rolled magazine or piece of wood to the affected limb with Ace wraps.

- Keep the patient warm to prevent shock.

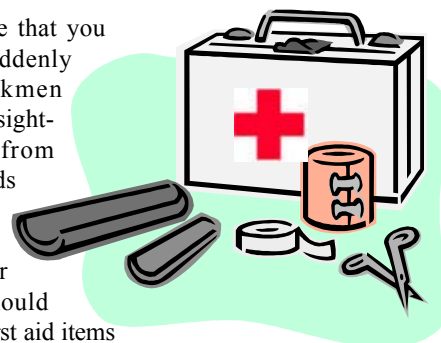
The best way to treat an injury is to avoid getting it. Never touch downed electrical wires, even days after the storm. They

may still be live. A line that you assume is dead may suddenly become live as workmen restore power. Don't go sight-seeing and stay away from windows. The high winds send glass, branches and other debris flying.

Residents preparing for the hurricane season should also add the following first aid items to their supplies:

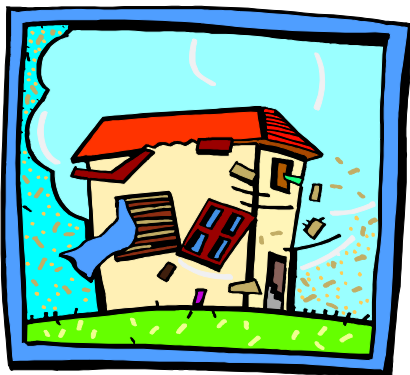
- Medications – Ensure personal prescriptions are up-to-date and filled. Asthmatics should consider a spare inhaler in addition to their asthma medication. Maintain enough prescription medication to last seven days, especially for heart problems, blood pressure, etc.
- Over-the-counter medications (cold medicines, pain relievers)
- Extra eye glasses
- Electrolyte solutions
- Band-aids, gauze/gauze pads, sponges
- Antiseptic solutions such as alcohol, iodine or peroxide
- Scissors
- Tape
- Canned/powered baby formula
- Ace bandages
- Adhesive tape
- Thermometer
- Blanket to keep shock or hypothermia patients warm.

Being prepared is essential to survival during a major hurricane as well as any emergency.



Is Your Housing Hurricane-resistant?

The following information is provided to assist residents in determining whether their housing is hurricane-resistant. If you reside in nonhurricane-resistant housing, you are assigned a shelter. People in nonhurricane-resistant housing can also stay with a neighbor or friend who is in hurricane-resistant housing, but must first fill out a relocation memorandum for hurricane shelter reassignment with the Operations Department. Call 4704/4366 for more information.



Non-Hurricane-resistant Housing

Paola Point, Radio Point
Deer Point
Marina Point, Marine Site
Radio Range
Hibiscus Hollow, New Trailers

Camp America, Tierra Kay and
Radio Range

Assigned Shelter

Youth Center
BOQ Common
Elementary School Gym
Hurricane Shelters
Gold Hill Barracks
Hurricane Shelters
Base Gym/Bowling Alley and
HS Gym.

Weather Office, from page 1

shows mountains surrounding the base, and even higher mountains in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Hurricane tracks generally follow a west-northwest pattern and when they hit the mountains, it takes away a lot of the storm's punch.

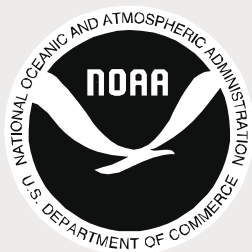
Any hurricane that comes within 180 miles is considered a storm that could cause damage to the base.

The most dangerous characteristic of a hurricane is the storm surge which can raise tide levels well above normal. A surge of more than eight feet would be very serious in Guantanamo Bay. Fortunately, the huge drop-off in water depth just outside the bay, severely cuts down the storm surge and protects the base.

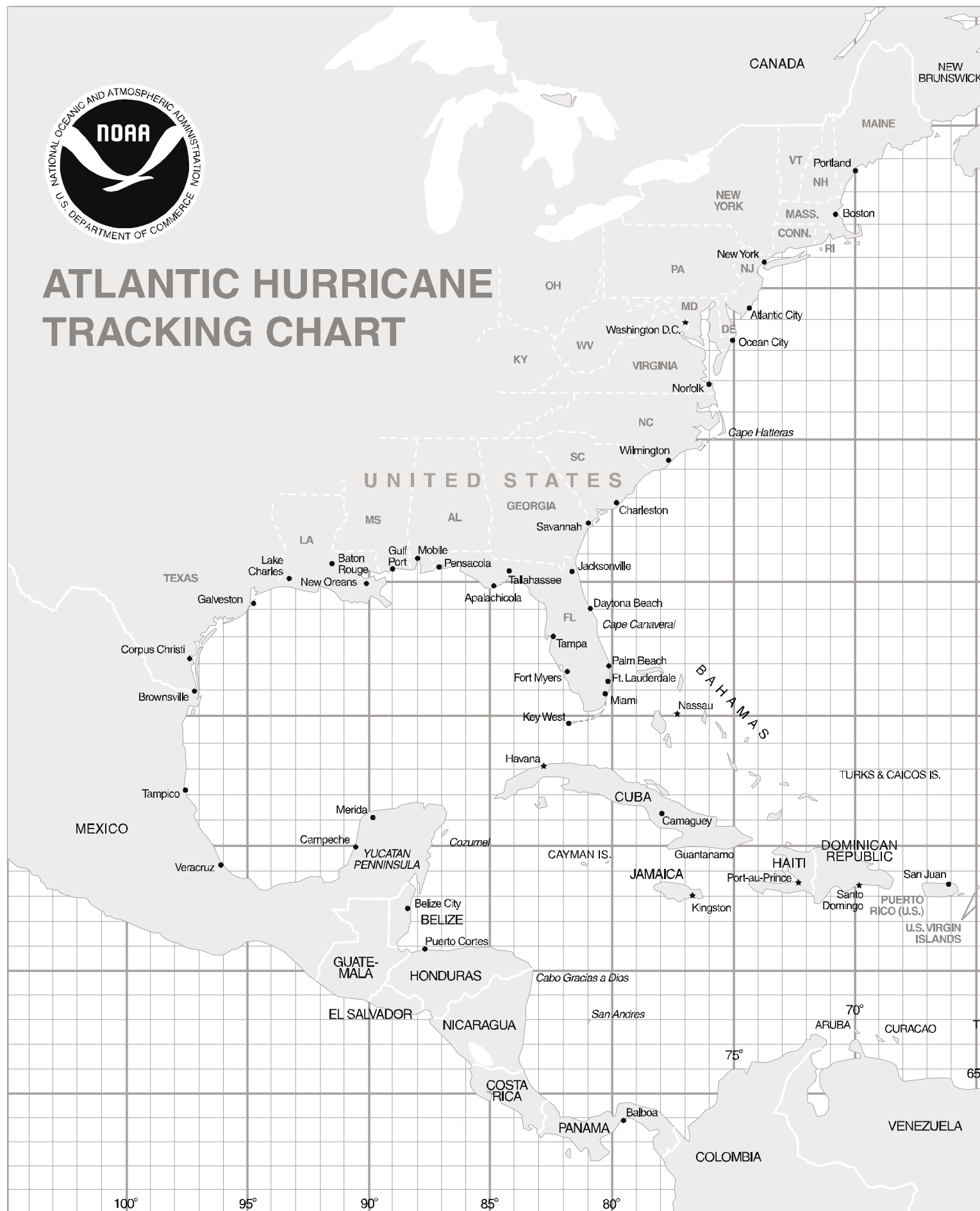
The surge, however, could cause large swells in the bay and subsequent shoreline damage and erosion.

As a tropical storm or hurricane approaches, different conditions are set. NLMOD does not set these conditions. Instead, the office advises the Naval Base Commander of the present weather conditions, the expected hurricane track as it approaches and on the different conditions. He then sets the conditions as appropriate.

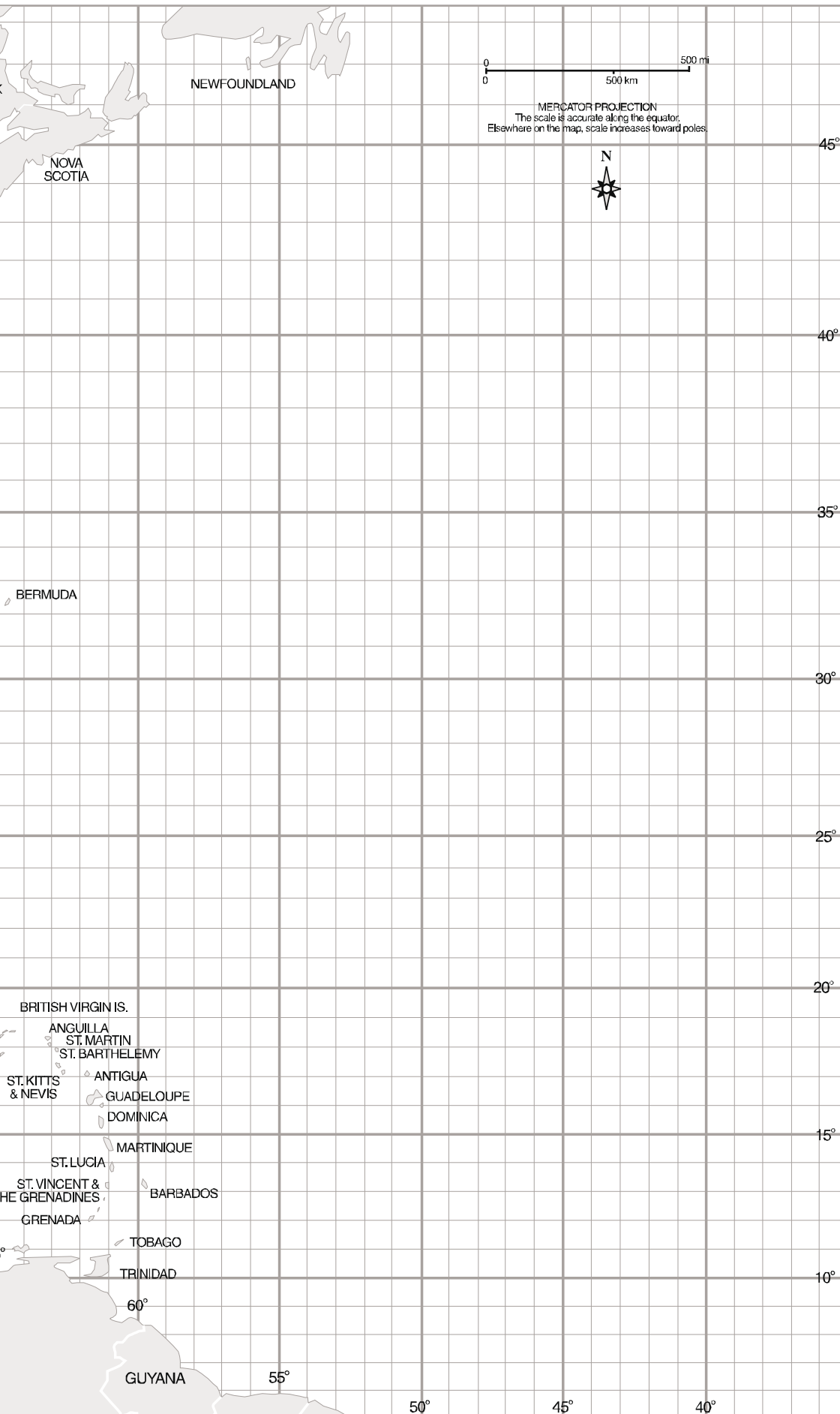
Finally, NLMOD offers some advice to base residents on being prepared. They suggest you have an alternate source of power, have batteries for your flashlights and radio, put together a hurricane basket, and watch your televisions and listen to your radios.



ATLANTIC HURRICANE TRACKING CHART



2004 Storm Names ...



Alex	Karl
Bonnie	Lisa
Charley	Matthew
Danielle	Nicole
Earl	Otto
Frances	Paula
Gaston	Richard
Hermine	Shary
Ivan	Tomas
Jeanne	Virginie
Walter	

To plot your own tracking map - Advisories are numbered consecutively for each storm and describe the present and forecast position and intensity of the storm. Hurricane advisories are issued at six-hour intervals, at midnight, 6 a.m., noon and 6 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

Bulletins provide additional information. Each message gives the name, eye position, intensity and forecast movement of the hurricane.

Hurricane eye positions are given by latitude and longitude, to the nearest one-tenth of one degree.

Eye positions may also be given as a statute mile compass direction from a specified point.

When you receive hurricane advisories, note the advisory number, eye position, intensity and forecast direction of movement. Then, make the eye position on the tracking chart.

Because hurricanes change direction very quickly, you should concentrate more on where the storm will go, rather than where it has been.

Tropical cyclones are not given names until they reach tropical storm stage. They are closed isobars, have rotary circulation and winds greater than 34 knots (39 mph).

Hurricanes typically form off the coast of Western Africa, the Western Caribbean or in the Gulf of Mexico and they normally track west or north.

A Guide to the Saffir-Simpson Scale

The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale is a 1–5 rating based on the hurricane's present intensity. This is used to give an estimate of the potential property damage and flooding expected along the coast from a hurricane landfall. Wind speed is the determining factor in the scale, as storm surge values are highly dependent on the slope of the continental shelf in the landfall region. Note that all winds are using the U.S. 1-minute average.

Category One Hurricane:

Winds 74-95 mph (64-82 kts or 119-153 km/hr). Storm surge is generally 4-5 feet above normal. No real damage to building structures. Damage is primarily to unanchored mobile homes, shrubbery, and trees. Some damage to poorly constructed signs. Also some coastal road flooding and minor pier damage should be expected. Hurricanes Allison of 1995 and Danny of 1997 were Category One hurricanes at peak intensity.

Category Two Hurricane:

Winds 96-110 mph (83-95 kts or 154-177 km/hr). Storm surge is generally 6-8 feet above normal. Minor damage can be expected to building roofs, doors, and windows. Expect considerable damage to shrubbery and trees with some trees blown down. Also, damage to mobile homes, poorly constructed signs, and piers will occur. Coastal and low-lying escape routes flood 2-4 hours before arrival of the hurricane center. Small craft in unprotected anchorages break moorings. Hurricane Bonnie of 1998 was a Category Two hurricane when it hit the North Carolina coast, while Hurricane Georges of 1998 was a Category Two Hurricane when it hit the Florida Keys and the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Category Three Hurricane:

Winds 111-130 mph (96-113 kts or 178-209 km/hr). Storm surge is generally 9-12 feet above normal. Some structural damage to small residences and utility buildings will occur with a minor amount of curtain wall failures. Expect damage to shrubbery, foliage will be blown off trees and large trees can be blown down. Mobile homes and poorly constructed signs are destroyed. Low-lying escape routes are cut by rising water 3-5 hours before arrival of the center of the hurricane. Flooding near the coast destroys smaller structures with larger structures damaged by battering from



Guantanamo Bay escaped Georges' fury with only property damage, a testimony to being prepared. Photo from the Gazette Photo Archives.

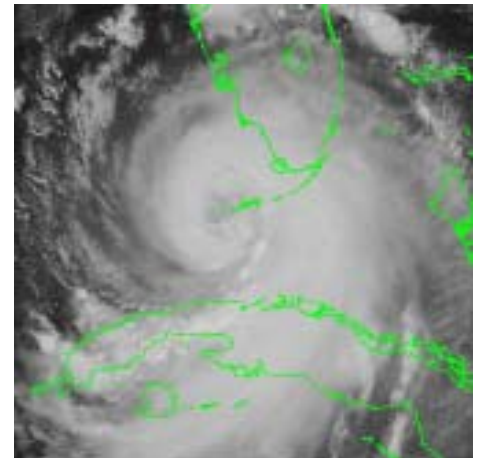
floating debris. Flooding can be expected where terrain is continuously lower than 5 feet above mean sea level, up to 8 miles (13 km) inland or more. Evacuation of low-lying residences with several blocks of the shoreline may be required. Hurricanes Roxanne of 1995 and Fran of 1996 were Category Three hurricanes at landfall on the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico and in North Carolina, respectively.

Category Four Hurricane:

Winds 131-155 mph (114-135 kts or 210-249 km/hr). Storm surge is generally 13-18 feet above normal. More extensive curtain wall failures with some complete roof structure failures on small residences. Shrubs, trees, and all signs are blown down. Mobile homes will be completely destroyed. Extensive damage can occur to doors and windows. Low-lying escape routes may be cut by rising water 3-5 hours before arrival of the center of the hurricane. Expect major damage to lower floors of structures near the shore. Where terrain is lower than 10 feet above sea level, flooding may occur requiring massive evacuation of residential areas as far inland as 6 miles (10 km). Hurricane Luis of 1995 was a Category Four hurricane while moving over the Leeward Islands. Hurricanes Felix and Opal of 1995 also reached Category Four status at peak intensity.

Category Five Hurricane:

Winds greater than 155 mph (135 kts or 249 km/hr). Storm surge is generally greater than 18 feet above normal. Complete roof failure on many residences and industrial



Weather image of Hurricane George from the Florida Climate Center, Office of State Climatologist.

buildings. Some complete building failures with small utility buildings blown over or away. All shrubs, trees, and signs will be blown down. Mobile homes will be completely destroyed. Expect severe window and extensive damage to doors. Low-lying escape routes are cut by rising water 3-5 hours before arrival of the center of the hurricane. Major damage to lower floors of all structures located less than 15 feet above sea level and within 500 yards of the shoreline. Massive evacuation of residential areas on low ground within 5-10 miles (8-16 km) of the shoreline may be required. Hurricane Mitch of 1998 was a Category Five hurricane at peak intensity over the western Caribbean. Hurricane Gilbert of 1988 was a Category Five hurricane at peak intensity and is one of the strongest Atlantic tropical cyclones of record.

What About Georgio?

Most base residents have passed by the Vet Clinic and seen Georgio the GTMO Goat munching away at the grass. Ever wonder what happens to him if and when a hurricane should strike? Well, wonder no more.

During a hurricane the Guantanamo Veterinary Treatment Facility (VTF), cannot possibly house the large number of GTMO pets due to their limited space. However, Georgio, the GTMO goat, just happens to be on orders and is exempt from this policy.

Georgio marks his fourth year in Guantanamo with the distinction of being the only official government mascot stationed here. "Georgio is a herd animal and quite frankly, we (vet clinic personnel) are his herd. He practices his herd skills by sometimes nudging up to new and unfamiliar persons who enter his zone. He's very partial to his blankie and mattress and loves to receive visitors," said Sgt. First Class Shelley Casinger, NCOIC Vet Clinic.

In the event of a hurricane striking the island, Georgio, along with the base's military working dogs would be the only animals housed in the VTF, with the exception of pets who require 24-hour care, such as prescription medication (see article below).



Georgio's primary caregiver, Sgt. 1st Class Shelley Casinger, NCOIC Vet Clinic, administers a little TLC to one of her favorite charges.



FM 103.1: Update Central

Naval Media Center (NMC) Detachment's FM 103.1 is Guantanamo Bay's primary emergency broadcast station or EBS. The detachment and its radio transmitters have emergency auxiliary power which allow uninterrupted broadcast capability in the event of storm-related power outages.

Radio and television broadcasts are effective ways to communicate with large groups of people during weather emergencies because of both the speed and efficiency of transmissions.

NLMOD provides the NMC with weather reports and hurricane conditions set by the base commander. They then pass it on to the community within seconds, if necessary.

In a severe storm, the radio station stays on the air as long as possible to pass on as much information to the community as it can, as required by the base commander. So, make sure you have a portable radio and plenty of batteries.

During a hurricane, the radio becomes more than a source of information. Listeners can tune in and find out exactly where the hurricane is, what it's doing - they can even track it themselves using a hurricane tracking chart.

Should NMC lose its primary FM signal, emergency information will be broadcast on AM 1340.

Protect Pets During Hurricane Season

In the event of a hurricane, animals are not allowed in the base emergency shelters for public health and safety reasons. This means planning ahead is essential. The Veterinary Treatment Facility no longer maintains an animal shelter.

Pet owners whose pets require 24-hour care may bring their pets to the VTF if no other arrangements can be made. Owners must receive authorization to utilize this service. This will give the staff an indication of how many pets will be arriving.

Before hurricane season arrives, you should prepare a hurricane basket for your pet, too.

These items include:

Collar (include leash for dogs), Water for three days, Food for three days (1 - 5 lb bag), Familiar toys and one towel or blanket, Food and water bowls (ones not easily knocked over), Cat litter and litter box (20-lb. bag of non-scooping litter), Medications, Towel/blanket, Remember these items will be needed to properly care for your animals in the event of an emergency.

If your house is hurricane-resistant:

- Prepare an area in your house that is away from windows, such as in a utility room or bathroom.
- Bring your pet inside. Never leave pets outside during a hurricane.
- Leave only dry foods that are relatively unpalatable to prevent overeating.
- Do not leave any vitamins or mineral supplements; overeating them could cause salt poisoning.
- Water should be left in bathtubs or other sturdy containers to prevent spillage.
- Separate your pets; animals who are usually friendly may become scared and fight.
- Provide an area off the floor in case of flooding.

When Hurricane Condition I is announced, pet owners authorized to use the shelter must drop off pets withing six hours.

The animal must be in a carrier (one pet per carrier), clearly labeled with the pet's name, owner's name and phone number. All pets must have items listed in the hurricane basket. The VTF will not provide those items. Once the hurricane passes and the All Clear announced, pet owners have 12 hours to pick up their pets. For more information, call the VTF at 2101 or 2212.

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- Maintain your hurricane basket.
- Maintain several hurricane lamps with sufficient fuel or candles.
- Keep emergency cooking material available.
- Provide means to store fresh water.

When a tropical storm/hurricane threatens

- Trim dead wood from trees.
- Pickup and store loose objects in your yard, patio or working area.
- Check your medicines and first aid supplies.
- Check your stock of nonperishable foods and canned goods.
- Store water in a clean bathtub, sink and other containers.
- Fuel your car.
- Check your inventory of batteries for radio, flashlights, emergency lamps and emergency cooking material.
- Stay tuned to the EBS and TV channels 2, 4 or 6 for emergency broadcasts, official bulletins and announcements.
- If storms do come, move furniture to the center of the room or inside wall away from windows.

During a tropical storm/hurricane

- Do not go outside.
- Stay in your shelter until “all clear” is announced/signaled.
- Remain calm.
- When using lanterns, candles, etc., take precautions to prevent fires.

After the tropical storm/hurricane

- Use emergency lighting sparingly, it may take a while to restore power.
- Do not go near downed power lines.
- Do not go near disaster areas.
- Conserve water. If unsure about purity, boil for 5 minutes before using.
- Avoid frequent opening of the refrigerator and/or freezer to help keep the food cold.
- Do not eat cooked food that has not been refrigerated or canned goods that have been left open for a long time.
- Do not drive a vehicle, except in emergencies. The road may be washed out, covered with loose debris or otherwise impassable.

Remember your safety rules, listen closely to the television and radio, and reread this special edition. It could be the most important thing you do as you prepare for hurricane season.



Hurricanes technically come under the heading of “tropical cyclones,” but the West Indian definition “big wind” draws a better picture. These giant storms form over warm, tropical Atlantic waters. If they become organized, they are reclassified as a “tropical depression” and are assigned a number by the National Hurricane Center. If the winds grow to 40 mph, it is upgraded to a “tropical storm” and receives a name. When winds reach 75 mph, the storm officially becomes a hurricane.

Hurricane Conditions

The following are the hurricane conditions established for Naval Station Guantanamo Bay. When condition I, II or III are set, the information will be broadcast on radio station FM 103.1, the emergency broadcast station (EBS).

Hurricane Condition V

Set at the beginning of Hurricane Season, June 1 through November 30.

Hurricane Condition IV

Set when hurricane force winds are possible within 72 hours. Be fully prepared to set Hurricane Condition III.

Hurricane Condition III

Set when a hurricane is within 48 hours of the base. Check nonperishable food supplies, fill water containers and secure all loose objects. Be fully prepared to set Hurricane Condition II.

Hurricane Condition II

Set when a hurricane moves within 24 hours of the base. All emergency personnel report for duty and all base leave and liberty is cancelled. All base personnel should stay tuned to the EBS for further instructions. Outdoor furniture, trash cans and other moveable objects should be moved inside or securely tied. Water cans should be cleaned in preparation for filling with water. Be fully prepared to set Hurricane Condition I.

Hurricane Condition I and IA

Condition I is set when the hurricane is within 12 hours of the base. The base siren will sound a three-minute series of wails to indicate “take cover.” At this time, the ferry will be secured and all privately-owned vehicle traffic will be secured. Also, all nonessential personnel should proceed to hurricane shelters or hurricane-resistant housing.

Condition IA is set when winds of 34 knots (39 mph) have struck the base and higher winds are expected.

Hurricane Condition IR

Set when the hurricane has cleared the area. Firefighting, rescue and security teams will be deployed while nonessential personnel will remain in their shelters until a verbal “all clear” is passed. When “all clear” is passed, all military and civilian employees should leave their shelters and report to work centers for muster and further instructions. All other base personnel will be allowed to return to their residences.